

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

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USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 IO-14 OIC-04 AEC-11 OMB-01

SAM-01 DRC-01 /152 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3143

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 09343

SHAPE FOR INTAF

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, MCAP, MARR, GW

SUBJECT: MBFR AND THE BUNDESWEHR - DEFENSE MINISTRY

VIEWS

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN JUNE 10 MEETING WITH EMBOFF, ADMIRAL
STEINHAUS SUMMED UP DEFENSE MINISTRY APPROACH TO MBFR
BY EMPHASIZING IMPORTANCE OF COMMON CEILING, TWO-PHASED
APPROACH AND GERMAN WISH TO TAKE REDUCTIONS VIA CONVER-
SION OF SOME ACTIVE FORCES TO CADRE OR RESERVE STATUS.
KEY ALLIED GOAL SHOULD BE LESENING
OF EXISTING DISPARITIES FAVORING THE EAST.
STEINHAUS SEEMED SOMEWHAT LESS INSISTENT ON TYING
GERMAN REDUCTIONS IN MBFR II TO BUNDESWEHR REFORM
PROPOSALS, SAYING THAT FRG REDUCTIONS WOULD DEPEND ON
THE NUMBER OF GERMAN FORCES EXISTING AT THE TIME OF THE
AGREEMENT. STEINHAUS ALSO CONTINUED TO ATTACH IMPORTANCE

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TO ADDITIONAL WARNING TIME THAT MIGHT BE GAINED BY

CONSTRAINTS. END SUMMARY

1. EMBOFF BEGAN CONVERSATION WITH STEINHAUS BY NOTING LONG-STANDING DEFENSE MINISTRY SUPPORT, IN CONTEXT OF EARLIER STATIONED-INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTION ISSUE, FOR TIGHT LINKAGE BETWEEN THE TWO PHASES OF MBFR. GIVEN THAT BACKGROUND OF DEFENSE MINISTRY (AND PARTICULARLY POLICYPLANNING STAFF) THINKING, EMBOFF INQUIRED CONCERNING APPARENT MOD PREFERENCE FOR DELIBERATE PACE IN PRESENTATION TO SOVIETS OF AGREED ALLIED LINKAGE FORMULATIONS. STEINHAUS REPLIED THAT FRG CONTINUES TO FAVOR TIGHT LINKAGE BETWEEN THE TWO PHASES, TO ASSURE THAT THERE WILL BE A SECOND PHASE IN WHICH THE BUNDESWEHR CAN PARTICIPATE. HE SAID TIMING OF USE WITH RUSSIANS OF ALLIED LINKAGE FORMULATIONS WAS A MATTER OF TACTICS, AND THAT THE SOVIETS DID NOT PRESENTLY APPEAR TO BE READY TO RESPOND TO SUCH WESTERN ENTREATIES WITH CONCESSIONS OF THEIR OWN. STEINHAUS SAID THERE WERE LIMITS TO THE NUMBER OF CONCESSIONS THE WEST COULD MAKE IN THE CONTEXT OF ITS OVERALL POSITION AND THAT THE USE OF SUCH CONCESSIONS SHOULD BE HUSBANDED FOR THE MOST EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION. EMBOFF OBSERVED THAT AGREED ALLIED LINKAGE FORMULATIONS SHOULD BE SEEN AS "ONE-WAY BRIDGES" FACILITATING SOVIET ACCEPTANCE OF THE OVERALL ALLIED APPROACH.

2. STEINHAUS SAID HE SENSED A CERTAIN U.S. DOUBT CONCERNING THE CONTINUED GERMAN WISH FOR BUNDESWEHR PARTICIPATION IN MBFR-II REDUCTIONS. HE SAID SUCH DOUBTS ARE BASELESS AND SIMPLY FALSE. THE OVERRIDING GERMAN GOAL IN MBFR IS ACHIEVEMENT OF A COMMON CEILING, WHICH WOULD REDUCE THE DISPARITIES IN GROUND FORCE LEVELS PRESENTLY REDOUNDING TO THE SOVIET ADVANTAGE. THERE COULD BE NO DOUBT THAT ACHIEVEMENT OF THE COMMON CEILING WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT SUBSEQUENT BUNDESWEHR PARTICIPATION. STEINHAUS SAID THE FRG HAS NO OBJECTION TO BUNDESWEHR PARTICIPATION IN MBFR II. HOWEVER, MBFR MUST NOT HAVE THE EFFECT OF ISOLATING THE BUNDESWEHR (OR GERMAN TERRITORY) WITHIN THE EC-9 OR IN EUROPE GENERALLY. THERE MUST BE NO

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NATIONAL SUBCEILINGS AND ALL RPT ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS MUST TAKE REDUCTIONS IN MBFR II. SUCH AN APPROACH, BASED ON THE COMMON CEILING, IS THE ONLY WAY TO INSURE THAT PRESENT GROUND FORCE DISPARITIES WOULD NOT FURTHER INCREASE AS A RESULT OF MBFR.

3. STEINHAUS THEN TURNED THE QUESTION ON EMBOFF ASKING IF IN FACT THE USG REALLY WANTS AN MBFR II OR WHETHER

WASHINGTON WOULD BE PREPARED TO SCOOP UP THE BURDEN
SHARING IN MBFR I AND THEN REST ON ITS OARS. EMBOFF
SAID THE U.S. SUBSCRIBES TO THE REASONING STATED BY
STEINHAUS IN PARA 2 ABOVE AND THAT THE COMMON
CEILING REMAINED THE HEART OF THE U.S. POSITION. THIS
WAS TRUE FOR THE MILITARY REASONS STEINHAUS HAD
ARTICULATED. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, IT IS NECESSARY TO
PROVIDE A CONVINCING RATIONALE TO U.S. AND OTHER ALLIED

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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 09343

PARLIAMENTS AND PUBLICS FOR A DURABLE FORCE RELATIONSHIP
IN CENTRAL EUROPE. THIS WOULD BE AS USEFUL TO LEBER
IN OPPOSING EUROPEAN FORCE CUTS DURING EURO GROUP
DISCUSSIONS AS IT WOULD BE TO THE USG IN SEEKING
CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR EXISTING FORCE LEVELS.
STEINHAUS SAID HE WAS VERY GRATIFIED BY THIS
EXPLANATION, WHICH "CORRESPONDED 100 PERCENT" WITH THE

VIEWS OF HIS MINISTER.

4. IN VIEW OF STEINHAUS'S STRONG REITERATION OF THE GERMAN WISH FOR BUNDESWEHR PARTICIPATION IN PHASE II, EMBOFF THEN INQUIRED CONCERNING THE CHARACTER OF SUCH PARTICIPATION. STEINHAUS REPLIED ALONG FAMILIAR LINES, SAYING FRG FAVORED ARMS CONTROL RATHER THAN DISARMAMENT OF GERMAN AND OTHER INDIGENOUS EUROPEAN FORCES. IN SHORT, THE FRG WISHES TO TAKE REDUCTIONS BY CONVERTING EXISTING GERMAN FORCES TO RESERVE OR CADRE STATUS
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RATHER THAN BY TAKING ACTUAL REDUCTIONS IN FORCE LEVELS. STEINHAUS SAID THIS WOULD BE ONLY FAIR SINCE THE U.S. AND USSR WOULD TAKE REDUCTIONS BY WITHDRAWALS. BUT STEINHAUS SAID THIS APPROACH HAD BEEN MET BY SOME SKEPTICISM DURING RECENT CONVERSATIONS HE HAD HAD IN THE PENTAGON. STEINHAUS INQUIRED CONCERNING THE U.S. ATTITUDE TO THIS QUESTION.

5. EMBOFF REPLIED THAT U.S. HAD REACHED NO CONCLUSIONS AS YET CONCERNING THE CONTENTS OF MBFR II, BUT THAT HE WAS ALSO SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD BE PREPARED TO AGREE TO THE GERMANS TAKING THEIR PHASE II REDUCTIONS IN THE FORM OF THE 25,000 GROUND READY RESERVE FORCES IN THE BUNDESWEHR FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL. SINCE WE ARE ASKING MOSCOW TO WAIT UNTIL PHASE II TO GET THE PRIZE OF SOME BUNDESWEHR REDUCTIONS, IT SEEMED UNLIKELY THAT THE USSR COULD THEN ACCEPT "REDUCTIONS" WHICH WERE IN ANY CASE PLANNED FOR IMPLEMENTATION, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE BUNDESWEHR FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSALS, BY 1978.

6. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OUR BILATERAL CONVERSATIONS, STEINHAUS DID NOT CONTEST THIS REASONING. HE SAID ON THAT FOR MBFR PURPOSES, ONE SHOULD NOT FOCUS ON THE BUNDESWEHR REFORM PROPOSALS, WHICH MIGHT OR MIGHT NOT BE APPROVED AND IMPLEMENTED BY 1978. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSALS REQUIRE BUNDESTAG SUPPORT, AND WHILE STEINHAUS PRESENTLY FORESAW NO PARTICULAR PROBLEMS, ONE COULD NOT BE CERTAIN OF SUCH THINGS. HE SAID THE KEY STANDARD REGARDING BUNDESWEHR REDUCTIONS IN PHASE II WOULD BE THE NUMBER OF GERMAN ARMED FORCES WHICH EXIST AT THE TIME OF THE AGREEMENT. IF THE FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSAL WAS ON THE TRACKS BUT HAD NOT YET BEEN IMPLEMENTED, THE CONVERSION OF READY RESERVE FORCES MIGHT PROVIDE AN ANSWER. IF THE FORCE STRUCTURE PROPOSALS HAD ALREADY BEEN IMPLEMENTED OR WAS NOT TO BE IMPLEMENTED, THEN GERMAN CUTS WOULD HAVE TO COME OUT OF THEN EXISTING

FORCE LEVELS. IN ANY CASE, THIS IS A QUESTION FOR THE
FUTURE AND THE FRG HAS NO FIXED POSITION ON THE SUBJECT.
COMMENT: OVERALL IMPRESSION GIVEN BY STEINHAUS WAS THAT
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GERMANS STILL PREFER TO TAKE PHASE II REDUCTIONS BY
CADRE/RESERVE APPROACH, WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF FORCE
STRUCTURE PROPOSAL CONTEXT, BUT THAT DEFENSE MINISTRY
NOW SEEMS SOMEWHAT LESS INSISTENT ON BUNDESWEHR REFORM
STRUCTURE FRAMEWORK. END COMMENT

7. BESIDES REDUCTION ISSUE, STEINHAUS ALSO COMMENTED ON
AIR FORCES AND CONSTRAINTS. HE TOOK HARD LINE IN
OPPOSING INCLUSION OF AIR FORCES--"WHETHER IN PHASE I
OR PHASE II." HE BRIEFLY TALKED UP THE POTENTIAL GAINS
IN POLITICAL/MILITARY WARNING TIME THAT COULD BE
OBTAINED AS A RESULT OF APPROPRIATE CONSTRAINTS.
HILLENBRAND

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